

**WORKFORCE**

# Involvement of people with HIV and affected communities

**OBJECTIVES**

To maximise the relevance and appropriateness of HIV prevention, testing and treatment education, health promotion, policy and clinical care.

**CURRENT ISSUES**

■ The meaningful involvement of people with HIV and affected communities has been central to Australia’s HIV response for over thirty years. Unlike other countries, Australia has been able to harness the insights, knowledge, goodwill and skills of people with HIV and affected communities to ensure programs and services are relevant, accessible and able to achieve their desired impact for both individuals and public health;

■ This has included a sustained commitment to the meaningful involvement of people with HIV at all levels of the response, from local HIV and sexual health services engaging a client representative, through to the role of community organisations representing the collective experience of people with HIV;

■ While the role of an individual able to tell their personal story is vital and often represents a very rich source of learning for the audience, it is important that this individual story-telling

is complemented by representative roles – that is, by community advocates and community organisations that are able to move beyond an individual’s story to speak with authority about patterns in the experience of communities and to make recommendations informed by the trends across sub-populations. This includes being able to advocate for and inform the health system about the full diversity of lived experience and the need for tailoring to that experience.

**PROPOSED ACTIVITIES**

■ Commit to the greater involvement and meaningful engagement of people living with HIV and affected communities in all aspects of the response to HIV across Australia, including:

→ **Acknowledgement:** Research and practice findings which draw upon the experiences of people with HIV and affected communities to acknowledge the contributions made;

→ **Participation:** Projects requiring community guidance or input, including research projects, to include community participation, including the representation people with HIV;

→ **Leadership:** Support initiatives such as the *Positive Leadership Development Institute* to operate within each state and territory at least once per annum;

→ **Monitoring and accountability:** All HIV organisations to undertake a Meaningful Involvement of People with HIV audit and report their findings;

→ **Policy and practice:** All HIV organisations to have in place a contemporary *HIV in the Workplace* policy that includes protocols for HIV disclosure and privacy provisions in the workplace;

**IMPACT**

Maximise the reach and effectiveness of services and programs.

**COST-BENEFIT**

The greater involvement and meaningful engagement of people with HIV and affected communities will ensure programs and services are relevant and accessible, thereby improving uptake of prevention, testing and care, and supporting long-term retention in care.

**ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT**

\$0.